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EO 12958 DECL: 10/06/2019
TAGS PREL, PGOV, ECON, UK, KNNP, MOPS, IR, PK, AF
SUBJECT: SCENESSETTER FOR THE SECRETARY'S OCTOBER 10-11
VISIT TO LONDON

Classified By: Ambassador Louis B. Susman for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

1. (C//NF) Summary. The Secretary's visit to London comes on the heels of the Labour, Conservative, and Liberal Democrat political party conference. The UK on Key Issues

12. (S//NF) The Secretary's meetings with PM Gordon Brown and Foreign Secretary David Miliband likely will focus on the following key issues:
-- Afghanistan - As the second largest force contributor in Afghanistan, the UK has lost 219 soldiers since operations began in 2001. The up-to-date figure is 400.
-- Iran - The UK has privately shared with us that it is ready to proceed with designations of the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (IRI)
-- Pakistan - Because of immigration and economic ties, Pakistan has an important domestic dimension for the UK and will feature in public debate. The UK has already designated for Pakistan aid. British leaders view a secure Pakistan as key to regional stability.
-- Northern Ireland - Prime Minister Brown and Northern Ireland Secretary Shaun Woodward will probably ask the Secretary to urge Northern Ireland to ratify the Belfast Agreement.
-- Nuclear Non-proliferation - Both PM Brown and FS Miliband welcome U.S. leadership on the global nuclear non-proliferation agenda, including the New START Treaty.
-- Defense Trade Treaty - The PM and FS Miliband may ask about the status of the Defense Trade Treaty and when the Senate will ratify it. U.S. leaders have been pushing for Senate ratification.
-- Arms Trade Treaty - Miliband frequently raises with senior U.S. interlocutors the possibility of negotiating an ATT. We continue to have discussions on this issue.
-- Gary McKinnon Extradition Case - The PM will likely raise with the Secretary (as he has with the Ambassador) the extradition case of Gary McKinnon.
Domestic Politics in Flux in Run-up to Elections

13. (C//NF) The annual political party conferences currently underway have thrust the UK into electoral campaigning mode, with the Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties all highlighting their strengths and weaknesses. At present, the main issue is the elections about class divisions, highlighting Labour's strong public services record and its economic vision for Britain. At present, the main issue is the elections about class divisions, highlighting Labour's strong public services record and its economic vision for Britain. At present, the main issue is the elections about class divisions, highlighting Labour's strong public services record and its economic vision for Britain.

14. (C//NF) Conservative leader David Cameron's headline message to the media as the Tory conference began October 5 was about the UK's "twin challenges" of the economy and security.

15. (C//NF) In response to the summer 2009 parliamentary expenses scandal, which has alienated some voters from the political class and the main political parties, the UK government has announced a series of measures to combat corruption.

16. (C//NF) The UK's relationship with the U.S. has also become a campaign issue. During the fever pitch of UK media reporting on the release of WikiLeaks, the UK government has emphasized its commitment to the U.S. alliance.

Overview of UK Economy

17. (U) The UK officially entered recession in the third quarter of 2008 and has suffered a cumulative contraction of 5.7 percent over the last year.

18. (U) Public debt stands at GBP 800 billion (56.8 percent of GDP), its highest level since records began in 1974, and up from 56.6 percent last year. Visit London's Classified Website: http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Portal:Unit ed_Kingdom

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